Amendment to laws for the use of electronic voting machines

*275. SHRI LAL K. ADVANI:
SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the use of electronic voting machines was stopped after the 1984 Supreme Court judgement which till then, was in vogue in different by-elections, etc.;

(b) whether Government propose to move an amendment to the relevant laws(s) to remove the Court judgement's effect and to restore the pre-judgement position of holding elections through voting machines; and

(c) if not what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI BINDESHWARI DUBEY): (a) and (b) The electronic voting machine was not widely in use prior to the Supreme Court judgement referred to. The Election Commission had tried the machine on an expermental basis, in a few constituencies between May, 1982 and November, 1983.

The effect of the Supreme Court judgement is that if the electronic voting system is to be introduced, the relevant provisions of the existing Electoral Law and Statutory Rules should be amended. The machines were therefore not used in any election thereafter. No final decision has been taken as to when the amending Bill to facilitate the use of the machines should be introduced.

(c) While Government have taken a preliminary decision to replace the ballot paper system with the electronic voting machine other arrangements including the financial ones, have not yet been finalised.

rehabilitation of the Families of the IPKF personnel killed in Sri Lanka

*276. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of I.P.K.F. (Indian Peace Keeping Force) personnel killed in Sri Lanka so far;

(b) what steps are being taken to rehabilitate their families; and

(c) the manner in which Government propose to honour those deceased personnel?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI K. C. PANT): (a) The number of I.P.K.F. personnel killed in Sri Lanka as on 9th May, 1988 is 427.

(b) and (c) A statement indicating the steps being taken to rehabilitate their families and the manner in which Government propose to honour these deceased personnel is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

Government have already announced extension of Liberalised Pensionary awards and other concessions as applicable to battle casualities, for the families of IPKF men killed or wounded in Sri Lanka. Children of such personnel have been granted educational concessions including complete exemption from tuition and other fees, school bus charges, hostel charges for boarding students and full cost of books and stationery, as well as cost of uniform, where compulsory.

Upto two members of each of the families of Defence personnel killed in service or invalidated out with over 50 per cent disability attributable to service are given Priority IIA in employment through employment exchanges for Group C and Group D posts.

Dependents *i.e.* son|daughter|near relative of defence services personnel who die in harness are eligible to be provided with suitable Group 'C' or Group 'D' civil appointments, without registration in employment exchanges, as available in the Record Office/Regimental Centre/Parent Corps or unit/Armed Forces Headquarters and other Defence Establishments, subject to fulfilment of age and educational standards prescribed for the posts.

Next of kin of those killed in operation PAWAN are also given certain grants from non-public funds. They are also entitled to insurance benefits from the Army Group Insurance Scheme.

The I.P.K.F. personnel are being honoured for acts of gallantry and by way of conferring on them gallantry and distinguished service awards.

Election accelerator for the BARC

*277. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the USSR have agreed to make available to India the electron accelerator for the BARC in Bombay;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the terms of the agreement for the supply of accelerator to BARC; and

(d) if so, how fare it will be useful to India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. USSR have supplied to BARC an electron beam accelertor (model ILU-6) providing electrons with energy upto 2 million electron volts (2 MEV) and beam power of 20 KW. This equipment will be used for research in radiation processing and developing industrial applications of electron beams. trial applications of ectron beams.

(c) The equipment has been procured at an approximate cost of Rs. 63.00 lakhs as a commercial purchase.

(d) The accelerator will be useful in developing industrial applications of electron beams in areas of radiation acrosslinking of insulation of wires and cables, heat linkable materials for packaging end curing of chemical coatings.

Threat posed by Pakistan over north Arabian sea

*278. KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIA:
SHRI KAPIL VERMA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state what steps are being taken to meet the serious threat over vast areas of North Arabian sea posed by Pakistan's long range Atlantique aircrafts being equipped with air to surface exocet missiles?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI K. C. PANT): Government of India keeps all developments having a bearing on the country's security under constant observation and initiates appropriate measures from time to time to maintain defence preparedness. The Indian Navy from time to time is re-equipped and modernised in keeping with the emerging threat perceptions.

Tuticorin Heavy water plant

*279. SHRI SHEO KUMAR MISHRA:
SHRI RASHEED MASOOD:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Tuticorin heavy water plant had worked only one fifth of its installed capacity during the last eight years after its commissioning in 1978; if so, what are the reasons therefor:

(b) what was the production loss suffered by it so far; and

(c) the number of days the plant has been operated so far out of the total period of its existence?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) and (b) The Tuticorin Heavy Water Plant has been operating at improved levels of productions, excepting in the early years when plant and process problems were encountered. Major constraints relate to frequent interruptions of power supply, limitation in inputs from the fertilizer plant